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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JABS Continues to Raise Money for Local Gym

Kankakee, IL – When Nick Irvin recently returned to his roots in Kankakee, he stated the vision of wanting to give back to his community is now even greater. Nick is the owner of JABS which stands for Junior Advanced Boxing and Sports.

“We were not working with much equipment when we first started. Four cones established our boxing ring and we had a few gloves and pads. It was all about having the opportunity to get the kids to come so we could build relationships and later pour into them. We were always faith-based. We would pray and mentor them. Our goal is to take kids off the streets, put the guns down, and put the gloves up. We can work through our differences and live to see another day,” said JABS owner, Nick Irvin.

An upcoming gym, currently in the works, has now relocated in the City of Kankakee at 798 E. Willow Street. The building is being leased through Second Baptist Church in Kankakee. This, after operating out of Genesis Martial Arts and Fitness in Bradley for almost four years, which later shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nick stated he and his team began training youth eight years ago in his garage with Co-owner and head boxing coach, Chauncie Greer. The two would drive around town to pick up youth every Saturday. Months later, JABS partnered with fitness trainer and coach, Kris Kalmese, to train in a local facility where participation started to grow over the next few years. The team later began establishing long-term memberships and further training development while operating under Genesis.

“We had some kids come to us due to low self-esteem, train to compete or just to be involved. We are excited to be in Kankakee because this is where we come from and we want to continue to try and reach the young men we started with. We plan to teach them how to be men and how to be disciplined,” said Nick Irvin.

JABS held a silent auction and fundraiser in their new location last month with hopes to safely open soon in good condition. Last Saturday, a local carwash was held at Unique Detailing to continue to raise funds. Funds have gone toward replacing the entire roof and repairing the building. A GoFundMe account has been set up for building costs here: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/jabs-building-fund>. GT Express plans to donate wood; however, volunteers are needed for drop-off assistance. Those who are interested are asked to email junioradvancedboxing@gmail.com.

“Many of our youth have been impacted by trauma and need to learn healthy coping skills to manage their emotions. Having a place like JABS where kids can learn a skill and receive mentoring instead of engaging in violence benefits the entire community. It is very meaningful to have native Kankakeeans coming back home to invest in their community and our youth. I am very appreciative of the team at JABS,” said Mayor Wells-Armstrong.

Currently, JABS is working closely with the Economic and Community Development Agency with plans to open this month.

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The City of Kankakee is dedicated to protecting, building and nurturing the community while enhancing lives. We are a historic, vibrant, and active riverfront community. We continue to transform into an extraordinary place to dream, grow, and thrive. Embracing our diversity, we strive to be progressive, inclusive, and innovative. For more information on the City of Kankakee, please visit the website at www.citykankakee-il.gov.